

REMARKS

In view of the comments below, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the present application including rejected claims, as amended, and withdraw the claim rejections.

By this Preliminary Amendment Applicant has cancelled claims 1-7 and has added new claims 8-15. This renders moot all pending rejections of claims 1-7. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider these new claims.

No new matter is being added by these amendments. In particular, the use of the newly-recited search-area switching unit is clearly described in step S7 of Applicant's FIG. 2, which describes that "the targeted search area is switched from the given search area into the certain search area." (See, e.g., Applicant's specification, page 12, lines 16-22, and FIG. 2.)

And although there are no pending rejections of claims 8-15, Applicant provides the following comments to help distinguish these claims from the previously cited documents. In particular, Applicant provides the following comments regarding Lynn Woods, "Getting There Via Computer – computerized mapping software – Evaluation" ("Woods").

New claim 8 recites "a search-area switching unit for switching the target search area from a certain search area previously designated by the designating unit into a given search area associated with a given switching-information item, when the given switching-information item is designated by an input item." New claim 15 similarly recites "switching the target search area from the designated certain search area into a given search area associated with a given switching-information item, when the given switching-information item is designated by an input item." Woods does not disclose any such elements.

Simply selecting a location on a map, even if that location is in one of multiple search areas, is not the same as switching target search areas, as recited in claims 8 and 15. Nothing in Wood discloses or suggests dividing a search area into multiple areas, designating one search area, and then switching to another search area.

Conclusion

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, clearly and patentably distinguish over the cited references of record and as such are deemed allowable. Such allowance is hereby earnestly and respectfully solicited at an early date. If the Examiner has any suggestions, comments, or questions, calls are welcome at the telephone number below.

Although it is not anticipated that any additional fees are due or payable, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully Submitted,



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